

ANNEX F TO ANCHORAGE EARTHQUAKE CDRP

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

1. **MISSION** The Public Affairs mission is to serve as communication strategist, making the internal and external public aware of Corps of Engineers activities and services available through all communication outlets. This includes:

- a. Disseminating accurate, consistent, timely, and easy-to-understand information;
- b. Instilling confidence that government will conduct response and recovery operations fast, effectively, and efficiently;
- c. Providing critical information about how to apply for assistance and the location and status of life-sustaining shelters and resources; and
- d. Providing authoritative information to deal with unsubstantiated rumors.
- e. Providing advice to personnel who might be contacted by media representatives, to prevent the release of incorrect or misleading information and to enable such personnel to direct requests for information to the proper sources.

2. **RESPONSIBILITIES** include:

- a. Coordinate with the Joint Information Center at the Disaster Field Office and with other public affairs personnel working in the emergency.
- b. Act as a proponent for public involvement and partnering with residents, contractors, other federal agencies and interest groups.
- c. Serve as the primary spokesperson informing the public about activities as they relate to the overall recovery effort.
- d. Maintain a comprehensive command information program, which includes an "in-house" information vehicle to keep Corps employees informed about issues which affect them.
- e. Provide slides and material to be used for briefings by other Corps offices.
- f. Obtain photographic support and provide guidance on the photojournalism, historical documentation photography and video activities needed to ensure comprehensive coverage of the event.
- g. Contact the HQUSACE Historical Office to assess whether historical information-gathering activities are being addressed. Retain as much documentary material (SITREPs, news articles, video, internal communications, and the like) for historical purposes.

3. **GENERAL PROCEDURES:**

- a. Public affairs operations need to follow the “speak with one voice” principle.
- b. The early stages of a catastrophic disaster are a time of great confusion. Immediate action is required to correctly determine the actual situation, and to get correct information to both the victims and the outside world.
- c. Residents of the disaster area, and their friends and relatives elsewhere, need to know the progress of disaster relief efforts.

4. **SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS** include:

- a. POD and its districts have very limited Public Affairs staffing.
- b. POA personnel may not be available due to disaster impacts.
- c. The primary site of PAO activity will be Anchorage, with Seattle (Bothell), WA also being a primary site during the early stages of the response. Honolulu (POD) will not be a major site for PAO activity.
- d. Federal and State PAO activities will initially be coordinated at the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Public Affairs facility, at the DMVA headquarters at Camp Denali.
- e. PAO activities during the early stages of the response will be on a 24-hour basis. An event of this magnitude will involve worldwide interest. In addition, eastern U.S. media activities and HQUSACE PAO will be operating in a time zone 4 hours ahead of the disaster site.
- f. Certain aspects of PAO are simplified because the impacted area involves only one state, with a single Congressional district.
- g. Anchorage has a very high proportion of residents who have moved to the area, rather than growing up there. It also has a large military population and receives a large number of business and recreational travelers. As a result, there will be a large number of friends and relatives outside the disaster area who will want to know about conditions following the earthquake.

5. **PAO ACTIVITIES** include:

- a. Phase I, Preparedness: provide one copy of the Alaska Media Guide each to POD-PA and NWS-PA.
- b. Phase IIa, Activation:
 - (1) POA: Available employees will report to district headquarters; be prepared for possible redeployment to Camp Denali.
 - (2) POD/POH: Coordinate operations to allow deployment of one or more persons to Anchorage.

(3) NWS: Provide initial representation at Region X level. This requires extensive coordination with POD-PA.

(4) UOC: Activate HQUSACE PAO; alert PA augmentees for potential deployment to Anchorage.

c. Phase IIb, Initial Deployment:

(1) POA supports PAO activities at the Initial Operating Facility at Camp Denali.

(2) UOC, POD, and possibly NWD coordinate immediate deployment of one PAO representative to Anchorage.

d. Phase III, Deployment

(1) Deploy a full PAO contingent to Anchorage. This is designated as:

(a) PA Chief, GS-13

(b) PA Specialist, GS 12/11

(c) PA Specialist, night shift, GS 12/11

(d) Photojournalist, GS 11 (or contract)

(2) NWS: provide its copy of the Alaska Media Guide to deploying personnel.

(3) Assign a representative to the JIC.

(4) Establish a briefing/information center at the Division Forward Element (ERRO once activated)

(5) Coordinate the photographing, including videotaping, of disaster areas and USACE response activities.

(6) Gather information and input from other CMT, CAT, and ERRO operations.

(7) Develop and issue information bulletins.

(8) Coordinate requests for inspections of field operations sites with the FEMA JIC duty officer.

(9) Videotape TV news coverage of USACE press conferences and interviews.

(10) Provide personnel to escort VIPs and members of the news media to USACE field operations sites.

(11) Maintain documentation of response and recovery activities for historical purposes.

(12) Assist in developing a Point of Contact (POC) list for USACE field personnel, so that they can direct public and media inquiries to the appropriate source of information.

e. Phase IV

(1) Continue activities from Phase III.

(2) Coordinate with HQUSACE on requirements for historical documentation.

(3) At 30 days for general PAO employees, or 45 days for the chief, arrange for a transition to replacement personnel.

f. Phase V

(1) Transition activities to POA-PA, possibly with TDY augmentation.

(2) POA-PA would obtain data, including photos and video, for historical records.

5. PAO DUTIES

a. Establish a relationship with the Commander and his staff. Provide an overview of Public Affairs' role in strategic planning, understanding the pulse of different publics -- both external and internal, and the range of capabilities in public information, command information and community relations.

b. Establish a daily meeting with the Commander or senior leadership to brief on current Public Affairs activities. Determine specific focus/direction for upcoming activities.

c. Attend senior-level strategic planning meetings held by other emergency management agencies. Attend Joint Information Center briefings.

d. Immediately contact all media in the area, telling them who you are, where you're located, and inviting them to drop by. Develop a media list for the emergency.

e. Develop operational Public Affairs plans, if appropriate, and Q&As for major activities/sensitive issues/recurring themes.

f. Immediately set up an internal command information vehicle(s) (newsletter, bulletins, fact sheets, briefings). Use these to focus team members on critical issues and messages which concern the public.

g. Begin a transition notebook for the next Public Affairs team. This should include who's who (points of contact), pending actions, media interests, command interests, problems you've experienced and how they have been resolved.

6. PHOTOGRAPHIC SUPPORT

a. Emergency Response requires photographic support of a human aspect as well as of a technical/documentary nature. The photography requirements for Public Affairs - still or video - must meet the needs and standards of the commercial media for use in telling the Corps story. Photographs typically taken for damage survey are not the same as those needed to tell a compelling story, grab a reader's attention or highlight the human suffering, sacrifice and devastation that require humanitarian relief efforts provided by the Corps of Engineers.

b. Currently there are no dedicated photographers in POA, POH, or POD. Support will be provided through the UOC, and/or by use of contract photographers.

c. On-scene contracted photographic support will be limited in the early stages of the emergency. Many of the available photographers will be working for print and broadcast media.

APPENDIX 1 TO ANNEX F TO ANCHORAGE EARTHQUAKE CDRP SUPPORT TO FEMA

1. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is responsible for implementing Federal public affairs activities after a major disaster or emergency.
2. In the event of a catastrophic earthquake, a Joint Information Center (JIC) will be established as a central point for coordination of emergency public information, public affairs activities, and media access to information about the latest developments. The JIC is a physical location where Public Affairs Officers (PAOs) from involved agencies come together to ensure the coordination and release of accurate and consistent information that is disseminated quickly to the media and the public.
3. In Anchorage, the JIC would initially be established as a combined operation with the State of Alaska's information center at the National Guard Headquarters (located adjacent to the Alaska Division of Emergency Services office). Until that JIC is fully operational, there would probably be an interim JIC at the FEMA Region X Regional Operations Center at Bothell, WA. An additional JIC may be established at FEMA Headquarters. When multiple JICs are operating, release of information will be coordinated among those activities to the maximum extent possible.
4. The headquarters JIC will operate as long as necessary as a satellite of the on-scene JIC, and will provide information services to media in the Washington, DC, area. These services include production of the Recovery Times newsletter and daily updates for the media, FEMA Radio Network, national media monitoring and analysis, JIC reports, Internet services, and nationwide broadcast fax.
5. Once a full Disaster Field Office (DFO) has been established, the JIC will probably be collocated with that organization, either in the same structure or an adjacent structure. (However, ready access for media representatives is also a major factor in determining the exact location.) The close proximity is designed to facilitate the JIC's access to sources of information about the disaster operation and enable leadership access to the JIC.
6. Before its release, Federal, State, and local disaster information will be coordinated to the maximum extent possible to ensure consistency and accuracy.
7. All Federal agencies may use their own mechanisms for releasing information. No editorial or policy control is exercised by the coordinating PAO over other agencies' release of information about their own policies, procedures, or programs.
8. State and local governments, as well as voluntary and private responding organizations, are encouraged to participate in and share the resources of the JIC. If collocating at the JIC is not feasible, all organizations are encouraged to conduct their information activities in cooperation with the JIC.
9. The period immediately following a major disaster is critical in setting up the large and complex mechanism that will be needed to respond to the emergency public information and

news requirements generated by the disaster. This will require a significant mobilization of personnel and equipment during the early stages of the response.

10. The chief spokesperson for FEMA in a headquarters JIC is the FEMA Director of Media Affairs, or a designee, who fields inquiries from national news media. The chief spokesperson in an on-scene JIC is the lead PAO, who may be operating from a Regional Operations Center (ROC) until a JIC is set up in the disaster area. The lead PAO will consult with the FEMA Director of Media Affairs to ensure a smooth transition to field operations.

a. Media Relations serves as the primary point of contact for the media for information regarding all disaster response, recovery, and mitigation programs provided by FEMA, the State, and other Federal, State, local, and voluntary agencies. This includes providing the media with accurate and timely information on disaster operations, working with members of the media to encourage accurate and constructive news coverage, monitoring media coverage to ensure that critical messages are being reported, and identifying potential issues or problems that could have an impact on public confidence in the response and recovery effort.

b. Creative Services gathers information about response, recovery, and mitigation operations and develops and produces information for dissemination by the JIC to the print and broadcast media.

c. Multilingual Operations ensures that non-English-speaking populations receive accurate and timely information about disaster response, recovery, and mitigation programs through appropriate media and in their languages to the extent possible.

d. Special Projects plans and executes projects such as print and broadcast media public service campaigns, video documentation, surveys, special productions, and logistical support of public meetings and presentations.

11. The on-scene lead PAO serves as the primary point of contact in the field, handling public information responsibilities in support of the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO). The lead PAO will be either a deputy or a special assistant on the FCO's staff, and will have supervisory responsibility for the JIC. The lead PAO will represent the FCO (or FCO's deputy) with the media, public, and other agencies; serve as an advisor to the FCO, and implement public affairs policies and procedures as established by the Director of Media Affairs.

12. For an event of this magnitude, a JIC Coordinator will be appointed to handle the hour-to-hour operations of the JIC. The primary functions of the on-scene JIC are to:

a. Provide response and recovery information to individuals, families, and business and industry directly or indirectly affected by the disaster;

b. Monitor news coverage to ensure that accurate information is being disseminated;

c. Take action to correct misunderstandings, misinformation, and incorrect information concerning the disaster response, recovery, and mitigation operations that appear in the news media;

- d. Ensure that non-English-speaking populations receive accurate and timely information about disaster response, recovery, and mitigation operations through appropriate news media and, to the extent possible, in their languages;
 - e. Use a broad range of resources to disseminate information to disaster victims and the general public, including the Recovery Times newsletter, FEMA Radio Network, FEMA Recovery Radio, Recovery Channel, broadcast fax, and the Internet, as well as traditional print and broadcast news media;
 - f. Maintain contact with and gather information from Federal, State, local, and voluntary organizations taking part in disaster response operations;
 - g. Handle appropriate special projects such as news conferences and press operations for disaster area tours by FEMA officials and others;
 - h. Provide public affairs support and advice to the FCO and FCO staff; and
 - i. Coordinate with the Logistics Section to provide basic facilities, such as communications, office space, and supplies, to assist the news media in disseminating information to the public. (These facilities are provided as long as the FCO determines their provision to be in the public interest.)
13. Each person representing a JIC member organization will function in two capacities:
- a. Represent the agency in carrying out its public affairs mission; and
 - b. Provide public affairs services in support of the various JIC missions.

APPENDIX 2 TO ANNEX F TO ANCHORAGE EARTHQUAKE CDRP **USACE PUBLIC AFFAIRS POLICIES**

1. Effective media relations are an important part of District's public information program. Accurate, consistent information provided in short, easily-understood messages helps the public understand the importance of our missions, programs and projects. The Public Affairs Office must be the focal point of all media contacts with the District. PAO involvement helps ensure we are all "speaking with one voice" and providing accurate and consistent information to the media and, ultimately, the public.

2. Department of Defense (and Army and Corps of Engineers) policy in dealing with the media is maximum disclosure, with minimum delay subject to SAPP or -- Security, Accuracy, Policy, Propriety. However, as a general rule, employees who are contacted by reporters should not initially attempt to answer questions. Instead, they should refer the member of the press to the Public Affairs Office. The PAO staff is experienced in dealing with reporters and meeting their requirements. In most situations the PAO will contact the reporters, then research and answer his/her questions.

3. There will be instances -- particularly in emergencies, in the field or at public meetings -- when employees must "meet the press" without PAO assistance. In such instances, it is permissible for an employee to speak to the press, using the guidelines noted above and the following of "Do" and "Don't" lists:

Do

- Assume everything you say to a reporter will end up in print or on radio or television
- Tell the truth
- Stay in your lane (only discuss what is in your area of knowledge and authority)
- Be brief, positive and as non-technical as possible
- Offer additional assistance from PAO prior to publication of or airing the story

Don't

- Don't lie
- Don't speculate on things that are above your level of knowledge or authority
- Don't ask to see a "draft" of the story; most reporters consider this an insult (offering assistance in explaining complex scientific or engineering details is OK)
- Don't give the reporter your phone number unless you are willing to be a personal news source from then on; instead give the reporter the PAO's phone number (808-438-9862 in Hawaii, 907-753-2520 in Alaska).

After an employee does talk to the media, he/she should advise PAO of the contact, questions asked, etc. as soon as possible. This will enable PAO to take a leadership role in any follow-up contacts with the reporter that need to be made.

4. Following these basic guidelines will help ensure the media and the public get a clear, consistent, effective message about the District's missions, programs and projects.

APPENDIX 3 TO ANNEX F TO ANCHORAGE EARTHQUAKE CDRP

PAO EQUIPMENT LISTS

1. **Fly-Away Kit.** Items each Public Affairs professional should bring when responding to the emergency.

- Name tag
- USACE visibility items (white shirt, etc.)
- PAO Emergency Response Reference Book
- Cellular phone, with handout cards listing phone numbers. Note: whenever possible, these should be a model where an auxiliary battery pack is available, and both auxiliary pack and regular batteries would be taken to the disaster site. (At a minimum, the phone must be equipped for use with 12 volt DC power.)
- Hard hat
- Safety shoes
- AM/FM Radio with batteries
- Laptop computer equipped with internal modem and fax, USACE-standard software, download capability for digital photographs, and both 12 v DC and 120 v AC power capability.
- 2 boxes blank disks, software, backup disks, battery packs
- Portable printer with paper
- Fax machine with paper
- Postage-paid envelopes (various sizes)
- Current media list (Alaska Media Guide, available from NWS and POD)
- Camera, flash, film, batteries
- Several note pads
- Pens, highlighters, pencils, etc.
- Flashlight with batteries
- Tape recorder with batteries and tape
- Telephone list from affected district/division
- Cold weather clothing
- Government-sponsored travel credit card
- Appropriate personal supplies

2. Office Equipment and Supplies.

- Cellular phones (two at a minimum; see comments above on power supplies)
- Fax machine dedicated to Public Affairs
- Dictionary
- Projector for computer and video
- Slide projector with carousels
- Slide sheets
- TV
- VCR with blank tapes
- Immediate access to cable or satellite dish
- 1 or 2 automatic cameras; ample supply of slide and print film
- Government VISA (IMPACT) Card
- Forms or form software program (time sheets, vouchers)
- General office supplies

3. Recommended References

- A copy of this plan (downloaded from ENGLink)
- AP Style Guide
- World Almanac
- Congressional Directory (NOTE: the disaster only affects one Congressional district)
- Public Affairs Planning for Natural Disasters guidance
- ER 500-1-1
- ER 360-1-1
- Federal Response Plan
- PAO phone and address list
- PAO home phone list to include appropriate division and district
- Emergency Operations Centers phone and address list
- List of PA Emergency response volunteers (should include office and hotel phone numbers and home office designation)
- Significant Public Affairs Issues/Activities form
- Engineer FAR Supplement, Part 19, Small Business and Small Disadvantages Business Concerns, subpart 19.2
- Policies
- Glossary of terms
- Equation formulas, if they exist, to convert, for example, collected debris or plastic sheeting to land area mass
- Maps of state, recovery office area, and disaster area(s)
- Copy of driving laws that are specific to Alaska (note: available before the disaster at: <http://www.state.ak.us/local/akpages/ADMIN/dmv/dlmanual/dlman.pdf>)
- NOTE: Corps and FEMA boundary maps are not needed; the entire disaster area is in FEMA Region X, and Alaska District has both military and civil works responsibility for the area.